



NEWS RELEASE

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Governor Jack Dalrymple Proclaims February Heart Health Month in North Dakota

BISMARCK, N.D. –Governor Jack Dalrymple has proclaimed February 2015 as American Heart Month in North Dakota. In recognition of American Heart Month, the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) continues to raise awareness about the importance of prevention, early detection and treatment of heart disease.

“Heart disease is currently the leading cause of death in the state of North Dakota and in the United States,” said Shila Thorson, Stroke and Cardiac Systems of Care Coordinator for NDDoH. “Time is muscle. When a heart attack occurs, the blocked artery causes a lack of blood flow to the heart which damages the heart muscle by depriving it of oxygen. The faster you call 911 and receive treatment to open the blocked artery, the better your chances of preserving heart muscle and minimizing damage.”

Because every minute counts, the North Dakota Cardiac System works to educate the public about how to identify signs of a heart attack and dialing 9-1-1 to receive quality, definitive care quickly to increase odds of recovery and survival.

One major risk factor for heart disease and stroke is hypertension, also known as high blood pressure. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 1 of 3 U.S. adults—or 67 million people—have high blood pressure. Only about half (47%) of these people have their high blood pressure under control.

“Hypertension, the ‘silent killer,’ often has no signs or symptoms, so many people are unaware they have it. If left undetected and untreated, the condition can cause damage and lead to heart attacks, strokes, and other serious diseases,” said Thorson. “The North Dakota Department of Health encourages all adults to have their blood pressure screened.” The American Heart Association defines normal blood pressure as less than 120/80 mm Hg.

Not all heart disease can be prevented due to uncontrollable risk factors such as age, ethnic background and family history of heart disease. However, simple lifestyle changes such as eating a diet low in fat and salt, maintaining a healthy weight, exercising regularly, quitting smoking and limiting alcohol use can reduce the risk of suffering from heart disease.

For more information, contact Shila Thorson at 701.328.4569 or smthorson@nd.gov.

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PROCLAMATION
AMERICAN HEART MONTH
FEBRUARY 2015

WHEREAS, while progress has been significant in reducing deaths from heart disease, cardiovascular diseases are the nation's leading cause of death and costliest disease with direct and indirect costs estimated to be \$320.1 billion; and

WHEREAS, heart disease is the leading cause of death in North Dakota, accounting for 1,330 deaths in 2013; and

WHEREAS, the North Dakota Cardiac System's mission is to be an effective system of acute cardiovascular emergency care throughout the state and ensure and facilitate the implementation of the system; and

WHEREAS, hospitals and emergency medical services across the state of North Dakota are equipped with lifesaving equipment, such as 12-lead cardiac monitors and LUCAS automated CPR devices; and

WHEREAS, during American Heart Month, the American Heart Association is promoting education and awareness by encouraging citizens to learn the warning signs of heart attacks and strokes; and

WHEREAS, North Dakotans are encouraged to support the ongoing fight against heart disease and dial 9-1-1 to activate the lifesaving cardiac system of care that will increase survival rates.

NOW, THEREFORE, as Governor of the State of North Dakota, I do hereby proclaim February 2015, American Heart Month in the state of North Dakota.